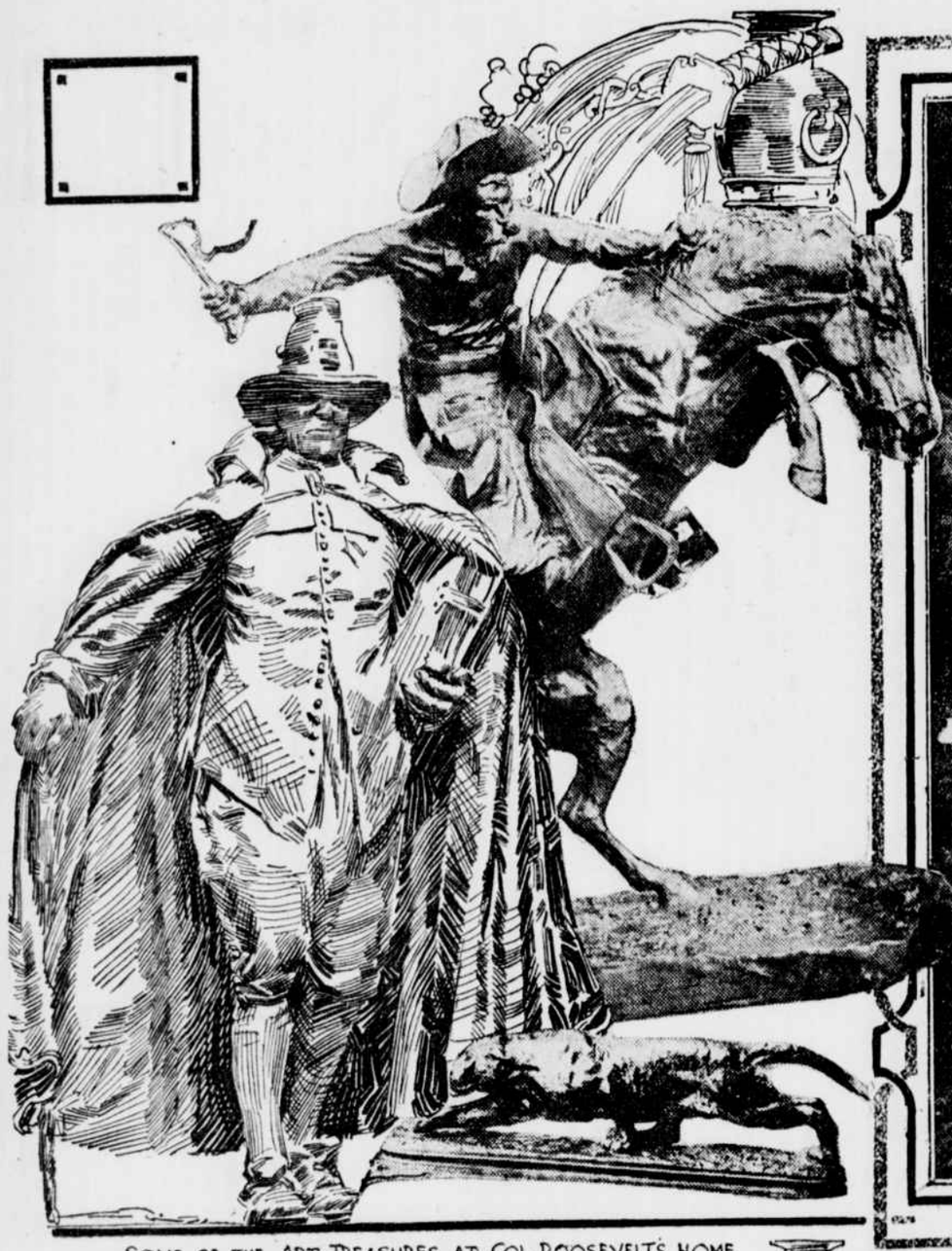
ROOSEVELT TALKS OF SINGERS OF THE FEATHERED TRIBES



SOME OF THE ART TREASURES AT COL. ROOSEVELT'S HOME, INCLUDING REMINGTON'S "BRONCHO BUSTER", PROCTOR'S "COUGAR" and a STATUETTE AFTER SAINT GAUDEN'S "PURITAN".

THE NORTH ROOM at SAGAMORE HILL.

BEFORE THE MORNING RIDE at SAGAMORE.

The Colonel Grows Reminiscent Regarding His Observation of Bird Life and the Pleasure Gleaned Therefrom—The Sagamore Hill Surroundings—Mementoes of Interesting Times and Places.

By Theodore Roosevelt.

THE thrush is a fine singer, too, a better singer than our American robin, but to my mind not at the best quite as good as the blackbird at his best; although often I found difficulty in telling the song of one from the song of the other, especially if I heard only two or three notes.

The larks were, of course, exceedingly attractive. It was fascinating to see them spring from the grass, circle upward, steadily singing and soaring for several minutes and then return to the point whence they had started. As my companion (Sir Edward Grey) pointed out, they exactly fulfilled Wordsworth's description, they soared but did not roam. It is quite impossible wholly to differentiate a bird's voice from its habits and surroundings. Although in the lark's song there are occasional musical notes, the song as a whole is not very musical; but it is so joyous, buoyant and unbroken and uttered under such conditions as fully to entitle the bird to the place he occupies with both poet and prose writer.

The most musical singer we heard was the blackcap warbler. To my ear its song seemed more musical than that of the nightingale. It was astonishingly powerful for so small a bird; in volume and continuity it does not come up to the songs of the thrushes and of certain other birds, but in quality, as an isolated bit of melody, it can hardly be surpassed.

Among the minor singers the robin was noticeable. We all know this pretty little bird from the books, and I was prepared to find him as friendly and attractive as he proved to be, but I had not realized how well he sang. It is not a loud song, but very musical and attractive, and the bird is said to sing practically all through the year. The song of the wren interested me much, because it was not in the least like that of our house wren, but, on the contrary, like that of our winter wren. The theme is the same as the winter wren's, but the song did not seem to me to be as brilliantly musical as that of the tiny singer of the North Woods. The sedge warbler sang in the thick reeds a mocking, ventriloquial lay, which reminded me at times of the less pronounced parts of our yellow-breasted chat's song. The cuckoo's cry was singularly attractive and musical, far more so than the rolling, many times repeated note of our rain-crow.

We did not reach the inn at Brockenhurst until about nine o'clock, just at nightfall, and a few minutes before that we heard a night-jar. It did not sound in the least like either our whippoorwill or our night-hawk, uttering a long-continued call of one or two syllables, repeated over and over. The chaffinch was very much in evidence, continually chanting its unimportant little ditty. I was pleased to see the bold, masterful missel thrush, the stormcock as it is often called; but this bird breeds and sings in the early spring, when the weather is still tempestuous, and had long been silent when we saw it. The starlings, rooks and jackdaws did not sing, and their calls were attractive merely as the calls of our grackles are attractive; and the other birds that we heard sing, though they played their part in the general chorus, were performers of no especial note, like our tree-creepers, pine warblers, and chipping-sparrows. The great spring chorus had already begun to subside, but the woods and fields were still vocal with beautiful bird music, the country was very lovely, the inn as comfortable as possible, and the bath and supper very enjoyable after our tramp; and altogether I passed no pleasanter twenty-four hours during my entire European trip.

Ten days later, at Sagamore Hill, I was among my own birds, and was much interested as I listened to and looked at them in remembering the notes and actions of the birds I had seen in England. On the evening of the first day I sat in my rocking-chair on the broad veranda, looking across the Sound toward the glory of the sunset. The thickly grassed hillside sloped down in front of me to a belt of forest from which rose the golden, leisurely chiming of the wood thrushes, chanting their vespers; through the still air came the warble of vireo and tanager; and after nightfall we heard the flight song of an oven-bird from the same belt of timber. Overhead an oriole

sang in the weeping elm, now and then breaking his song to scold like an overgrown wren. Song-sparrows and catbirds sang in the shrubbery; one robin had built its nest over the front and one over the back door, and there was a chippy's nest in the wistaria vine by the stoop. During the next twenty-four hours I saw and heard, either right around the house or while walking down to bathe, through the woods, the following forty-two birds:

Little green heron, night heron, red-tailed hawk, yellow-billed cuckoo, kingfisher, flicker, humming-bird, swift, meadow-lark, red-winged blackbird, sharp-tailed finch, song-sparrow, chipping-sparrow, bush-sparrow, purple finch, Baltimore oriole, cowbunting, robin, wood thrush, thrasher, catbird, scarlet tanager, red-eyed vireo, yellow warbler, black throated green warbler, kingbird, wood peewee, crow, blue jay, cedar-bird, Maryland yellowthroat, chickadee, black and white creeper, barn swallow, white-breasted swallow, ovenbird, thistle-finch, vesper-finch, indigo bunting, towhee, grasshopper-sparrow, and screech owl.

The birds were still in full song, for on Long Island there is little abatement in the chorus until about the second week of July, when the blossoming of the chestnut trees patches the woodland with frothy greenish-yellow.*

Our most beautiful singers are the wood thrushes; they sing not only in the early morning, but throughout the long, hot June afternoons. Sometimes they sing in the trees immediately around the house, and if the air is still we can always hear them from among the tall trees at the foot of the hill. The thrashers sing in the hedgerows beyond the garden, the catbirds everywhere. The catbirds have such an attractive song that it is extremely irritating to know that at any moment they may interrupt it to mew and squeal. The bold, cheery music of the robins always seems typical of the bold, cheery birds themselves.

*Alas! the blight has now destroyed the chestnut trees and robbed our woods of one of their distinctive beauties.

The Baltimore orioles nest in the young elms around the house, and the orchard orioles in the apple trees near the garden and outbuildings. Among the earliest sounds of spring is the cheerful, simple, homely song of the song-sparrow; and in March we also hear the piercing cadence of the meadow-lark—to us one of the most attractive of all bird calls. Of late years now and then we hear the rollicking, bubbling melody of the bobolink in the pastures back of the barn; and when the full chorus of these and of many other of the singers of spring is dying down, there are some true hot-weather songsters, such as the brightly hued indigo buntings and thistle-finches. Among the finches one of the most musical and plaintive songs is that of the bush-sparrow—I do not know why the books call it field-sparrow, for it does not dwell in the open fields like the vesper-finch, the savannah-sparrow, and the grasshopper-sparrow, but among the cedars and bayberry bushes and young locusts in the same places where the prairie warbler is found. Nor is it only the true songs that delight us. We love to hear the flickers call, and we readily pardon any one of their number which, as occasionally happens, is bold enough to wake us in the early morning by drumming on the shingles of the roof. In our ears the red-winged blackbirds have a very attractive note. We love the screaming of the red-tailed hawks as they soar overhead, and even the calls of the night herons that nest in the tall water maples by one of the wood ponds on our place, and the little green herons that nest beside the salt marsh. It is hard to tell just how much of the attraction in any bird-note lies in the music itself and how much in the associations. This is what makes it so useless to try to compare the bird songs of one country with those of another. A man who is worth anything can no more be entirely impartial in speaking of the bird songs with which from his earliest childhood he has been familiar than he can be entirely impartial in speaking of his own family.

At Sagamore Hill we love a great many things—birds and trees and books, and all things beautiful, and horses and rifles and children and hard work and the joy of life. We have great fireplaces, and in them the logs roar and crackle during the long winter evenings. The big piazza is for the hot, still afternoons of summer. As in every house, there are things that appeal to the householder because of their associations, but which would not mean much to others. Naturally, any man who has been President, and filled other positions, accumulates such things, with scant regard to his own personal merits. Perhaps our most cherished possessions are a Remington bronze, "The Bronco Buster," given me by my men when the regiment was mustered out, and a big Tiffany silver vase given to Mrs. Roosevelt by the enlisted men of the battleship Louisiana after we returned from a cruise on that vessel to Panama. It was a real surprise gift, presented to her in the White House, on behalf of the whole crew, by four as strapping man-of-war's-men as ever swung a turret or pointed a twelve-inch gun. The enlisted men of the army I already knew well—of course I knew well the officers of both army and navy. But the enlisted men of the navy I grew to know well only when I was President. On the Louisiana Mrs. Roosevelt and I once dined at the chief petty officers' mess, and on another battleship, the Missouri (when I was in company with Admiral Evans and Captain Cowles), and again on the Sylph and on the Mayflower, we also dined as guests of the crew. When we finished our trip on the Louisiana I made a short speech to the assembled crew, and at its close one of the petty officers, the very picture of what a man-of-war's-man should look like, proposed three cheers for me in terms that struck me as curiously illustrative of America at her best; he said, "Now then, men, three cheers for Theodore Roosevelt, the typical American citizen!" That was the way in which they thought of the American President—and a very good way, too. It was an expression that would have come naturally only to men in whom the American principles of government and life were ingrained, just as they were ingrained in the men of my regiment. I need scarcely add, but I will add for the benefit of those who do not know, that this attitude of self-respecting identification of interest and purpose is not only compatible with but can only exist when there is fine and real discipline, as thorough and genuine as the discipline that has always obtained in the most formidable fighting fleets and armies. The discipline and the mutual respect are complementary, not antago-

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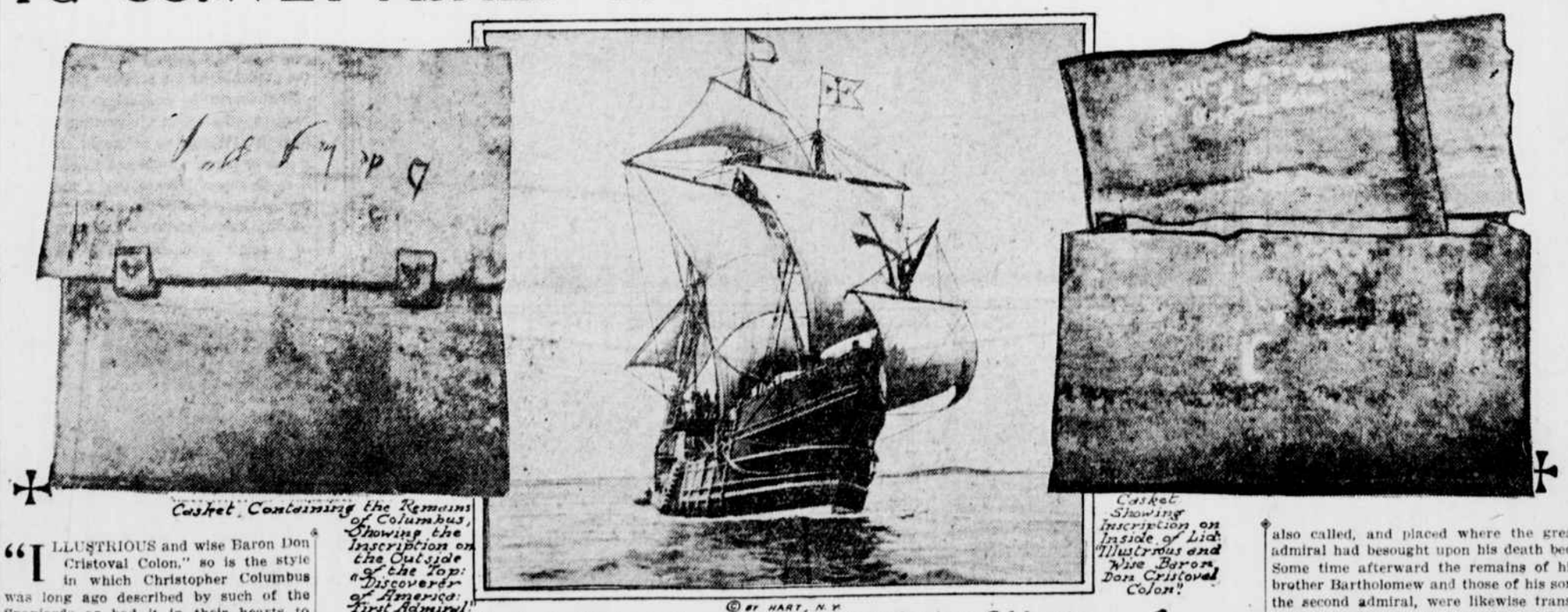
TO CONVEY ASHES OF COLUMBUS THROUGH CANAL



Casket Containing the Remains of Columbus, Showing the Inscription on the Outside of the Top: "Discoverer of America: First Admiral"

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The Santa Maria as Reproduced for the Columbian Celebration.

Casket Showing Inscription on Inside of Lid: "Illustrious and Wise Baron Don Cristoval Colon"

"ILLUSTRIOUS and wise Baron Don Cristoval Colon," so is the style in which Christopher Columbus was long ago described by such of the Spaniards as had it in their hearts to honor him. Now you know why the town at the eastern side of the Isthmus of Panama has so long borne the name of Colon. It was not merely a compliment to Christopher Columbus as an explorer in general, but because that binding tie between North and South America stopped his westward journey to his goal, the East Indies.

The people of the twentieth century have transformed that bulwark by digging the Panama Canal through it, and it is quite becoming that the modern duplicate of the Santa Maria should be in that maritime procession which is to commemorate the completion of this gigantic task. And it is particularly fitting that the ashes of Columbus should make this journey too. In this fashion, all that remains of that gallant pioneer shall complete in part the journey which he would undoubtedly have finished had not Nature interposed an insuperable barrier to his venturesome craft.

This is not merely a sentimental proposal, but a project which has the serious indorsement of the Commissioners of the Panama-Pacific Exposition and the authorities of the Dominican Republic. Upon their recent visit to Santo Domingo, the commissioners laid before the native government the request that the bones of Christopher Columbus should make in this fashion a voyage to San Francisco; and perhaps you don't know it, but the remnants of the mortal remains of this immortal explorer now line in the cathedral at Santo Domingo. At least, such is now generally believed to be the fact, and the story of this assumed certainty dates back only so far as the year 1877.

Possibly you wonder just why this little capital in the West Indies should be the resting place of the remains of Christopher Columbus, "Discoverer of America: First Admiral," but therein lies an interesting bit of history that has been the subject of dispute in the generations gone. Columbus's flagship, the Santa Maria, was wrecked upon the Haytian coast, and from his force he established a colony there of forty men, who built for their protection a fort which they named La Navidad. Columbus returned to Spain, but again reached the West Indies in September, 1493, having with him then a fleet of seventeen vessels, with a total complement of 1,500 men. Upon this voyage he discovered Dominica.

Again Columbus returned to Spain, and upon this third voyage to the West Indies, in 1498, he reached Santo Domingo, which had been founded by the Spaniards during his absence in Europe. During the rest of his career in the waters of the Caribbean Santo Domingo played an important part in the life of Columbus, and upon this point hinges the reason for the transfer of his remains from Valladolid, Spain, to this spot in the West Indies. Sentiment (and that on the part of the great explorer) was responsible for his burial in the cathedral at Santo Domingo.

The final years of his life were fairly stormy ones, and his own people turned against him. Only six years before his death, he was sent back to Spain from Santo Domingo loaded with chains. True, he was released immediately, but he could not recover his previous position, and the throne refused to reinstate him in his quondam dignities. However, after many difficulties, he mustered a fleet of four caravels and started out to circumnavigate the globe in 1502. In February of 1503 he returned to Jamaica, and had to remain upon the island because his ships were worm eaten and unfit to stand the further buffeting of the seas. After enduring great hardships and being obliged to quell a mutiny of a violent nature among his men all hands were relieved by the coming of other ships in 1504, and in November of that year he landed for the last time on the shores of Spain.

Misfortune was his lot there, because his faithful patron, Queen Isabella, died shortly afterward, and in vain he sought for recognition and the honors that had been his in the days of his popularity. He died two years later after continued neglect and poverty. It is said that just before he died in Valladolid Columbus asked that his body should be carried to Santo Domingo and given a resting place within the walls of the monastery there. This wish was later on fulfilled, and there began the trouble which has caused confusion as to the identity of the bones of Columbus.

The Spaniards were evidently far from mindful of Columbus at the time of his death, and it was nearly a month after his demise before an official record was made of the fact. According to the best authorities, his body was placed in a vault of a church of the Franciscan Fathers, and between then and 1509 was removed to the Carthusian Monastery of Santa Maria de las Cuevas, in the city of Seville. Subsequently his son, Diego Colon, the second admiral, was also buried there.

From Seville, the body of Columbus was taken, so some authorities state, in 1542, to Santo Domingo or Hispaniola, as it was also called, and placed where the great admiral had besought upon his death bed. Some time afterward the remains of his brother Bartholomew and those of his son, the second admiral, were likewise transferred to Santo Domingo, the bones of all of them finding a resting place within the cathedral.

Certain it is that the remains of Christopher Columbus lay in the cathedral at Santo Domingo in 1549, because verification of this fact was put on record by the Archbishop of the Dominican Diocese, who then wrote declaring that "the tomb of the great Admiral Christopher Columbus, in which his bones lie, was greatly venerated and respected in our Holy Church." But they have sleepy ways in the West Indies—at least they had in those far away days, and during the next two hundred years little was certainly known about the grave. What is more, for quite one hundred years there was no outward evidence by which to identify the tomb of Columbus. The Archbishop in 1549 had said that the explorer's bones rested in the main sanctuary, and this had become a tradition, but lacked confirmation of a visible character.

After some searching, it was learned from historical sources that the admiral's remains were in a leaden casket to the right of the altar platform in the sanctuary of the cathedral. Further, by way of identifying the grave, it was said that the body of one of his kin reposed on the other side, possibly that of his son

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